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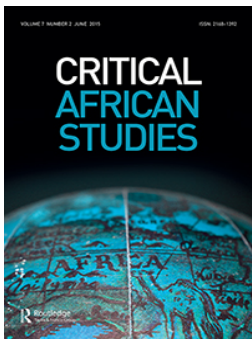
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## Corporealities of violence in southern and eastern Africa

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## EDITORIAL

### Corporealities of violence in southern and eastern Africa

In a recent discussion on the display and concealment of bodies during Rwanda's 1994 genocide, Nigel Eltringham asserts a common anthropological truism that 'violence is discursive', and that 'the victim's body is a key vehicle of that discourse' (2015, 161). This point preambles his argument that scholars should pay 'the same attention ... to post-mortem disposal as has been given to ante-mortem degradation' (2015, 172) in contexts of violent conflict. His argument points to the need to consider ante- and post-mortem violence within continuous, coherent necropolitical frameworks of meaning (Fontein 2010), across often arbitrary or imposed distinctions between life and death. But the argument he develops also questions the validity of differentiating between 'the instrumental, didactic display of bodies in "cultures of terror", where the intention is to *discipline* a population and, in contrast, the concealment of bodies in contexts of genocide, where the intention is to *exterminate* a population' (2015, 168). As he shows for Rwanda's genocide, with comparative examples drawn from Argentina (Robben 2004), Columbia (Uribe 2004) and Zimbabwe (Fontein 2010), this dualism simply does not work. 'Not all cultures of terror display bodies instrumentally' and as the Rwandan case clearly shows, 'not all genocides only involve concealment' (Eltringham 2015, 167–168).

Eltringham builds his case for the didactic and discursive significance of the diverse ways in which corpses were handled and disposed of during Rwanda's genocide with reference to, amongst other things, Taylor's well-known analysis of 'flow/blockage symbolism' in Rwanda's conceptions of the body (1999). These, Taylor argued, were reflected in the way that the genocide was carried out, which

betrayed a preoccupation with the movement of persons and substances and with the canals, arteries, and conduits along which persons and substances flow: rivers, roadways, pathways, and even conduits of the human body such as the reproductive and digestive systems. (Taylor 1999, 128)

Although this analysis is (as Eltringham notes) necessarily speculative – because it is impossible to know, without thorough ethnographic work amongst perpetrators, what motivated them, and it remains possible the disposal of bodies 'was more pragmatic' and 'prosaic' than 'poetic' – it does resemble cultural motifs and 'flow metaphors' elsewhere in the region (Warnier 2007).

The articles in this special issue not only engage with the concerns that Eltringham raises but also, in an important way, move beyond them. The articles derive from a workshop held at the University of Edinburgh in September 2013, one of three workshops that formed a three-year British Academy-funded project entitled Transforming Bodies: Health, Migration and Violence in Southern Africa. Building on a recent growth of academic interest in the complex social and political significance of human corporeality, this international partnership between scholars at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, and the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa, sought to explore how a focus on the transformations of human forms and substances

could offer new ways to investigate how violence, migration and health are linked in the lives of people across the southern and eastern Africa. Within this broader purpose, the 2013 Corporealities of Violence workshop in Edinburgh focused attention on how human bodies are not only the means and target of violence in a diversity of forms, and therefore transformed by it in a myriad of ways, but also how human corporealities are often at the centre of what follows violence. This can include displacement, movements and ‘returns’; medicalization, documentation and sometimes incarceration; acts of burial, mourning and commemoration; as well as forensic and vernacular examinations and exhumations for often elusive processes of ‘transitional justice’, ‘reconciliation’ and ‘healing’. Taking the transformations, interferences and flows of bodies and bodily substances animating violence and its consequences as its central problematic, our purpose was to explore the convergences and discontinuities of different forms of individual and orchestrated violence, encompassing political and social violence alongside torture, intimate partner violence, rape and broader forms of structural and/or institutionalized violence. Papers presented at the workshop engaged with diverse empirical contexts in Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, Zimbabwe and South Africa, to discuss, amongst other things, the post-violence affectivity of material and immaterial human traces (as corporeal remains, ghosts and traumas); the performative bodily and corporeal practices of security officers, criminalities and public protests; and the ‘continuous trauma’ of gendered domestic violence and sexual violation, and the radical destabilization of bodies and subjectivities that this can produce.<sup>1</sup> Those articles that have been revised and included here focus on the categorization of bodies, materials and spaces in relation to rape and sexual violence in Cape Town (Jensen); the dramatization of violence upon women’s bodies in text and on screen (Mattosio) in South Africa; the entanglement of corporeality, survivor-hood, identity and diagnoses of post-conflict trauma in Rwanda (Guglielmo); and the complications and affordances of exhuming and exhumed human remains after genocide and war in Rwanda and Uganda (Major; Jahn and Wilhem-Solomon).

In many respects, therefore, the papers presented at the workshop, and particularly those published here, do answer Eltringham’s call for scholars to attend ‘to the “poetics” of violent practice’ as forms of ‘meaningful cultural expression’, as apparent in the handling of dead bodies as much as in forms of ‘ante-mortem degradation’, violence and killing that anthropology has more conventionally considered. However, where we move beyond Eltringham’s approach is in our determination to transcend a rather tired understanding of ‘the body’ as simply a ‘discursive vehicle’ and means of cultural expression. This is because, as with other early works (Hallam, Hockey, and Howarth 1999; Verdery 1999) at the vanguard of a more recent (and now much more sophisticated) burst of writing on the politics of violence, death and corpses, both in anthropology and in African studies,<sup>2</sup> this perspective still ultimately treats human forms and substances as passive and subject to the interpretative and meaning-creating practices of living human subjects. In line with a broader turn towards questions of materiality, our purpose in examining *corporealities of violence* is orientated around a need to understand the affectivities and efficacies of human substances and forms (Fontein and Harries 2013), as well as experiences and performances, in the ‘poetics’ of violent practice. This approach deliberately seeks to go beyond Appadurai’s view of the ‘social life of things’ (1986) deriving from the webs of meaning in which objects, things and substances find themselves, and beyond the dialectic of ‘subjects making objects making subjects’ (Pinney 2005, 269). Rather it seeks to understand how what Pinney has called the ‘torque’ of materiality (2005, 270) – that excessivity of things and substances that demands yet ultimately defies meaning and stabilization – is entangled both in violence and in responses to it.

In taking this approach, the papers here build on the assumption that while human bodies, substances and remains are things, and therefore their materiality – their stuffiness – matters, they are also (often) peculiar kinds of things and materials exactly because the complexity of their

entanglement with processes of containment and stabilization that meaning-making demands is usually imbricated in the ongoing constitution (or ‘purification’ – Latour 1993) of *subject-* as well as *object-hood*, in decidedly ambiguous and unfinished ways. Examining violence in terms of ‘corporeality’ then is about more than understanding how bodies are drawn into necropolitical meaning-making and semantic stabilization, either in the perpetration of, or/and in the wake of violence. It is rather about understanding how violence, and responses to it, inevitably engage, interrupt or interfere with, and often seek to (de-)stabilize, or perhaps channel or control the excessivity of stuff, particularly human stuff; an excessivity that causes, to use Jensen’s lexicon, forms and categories of action and subjectivity to ‘shimmer’ in and out of focus, demanding and yet always threatening to defy conceptual/material containment, determination and closure. In other words, violence and responses to it are always at least partly about interrupting/reasserting processes of material/conceptual containment, stabilization and ‘fixing’ through which people, bodies and lives, collective entities, orders and structures, such as ‘ethnic’ or ‘kin’ groups, ‘society’, ‘nation’ or ‘state’, are constituted, shaped or ‘held still’, amid ongoing, unbound flows of materials, forms and meanings.

### Gender, violence and categorical destabilization

Opening this collection, Jensen’s article engages with the difficult topic of sexual violence and rape inflicted upon women. Drawing on ethnographic work conducted in Cape Town, Jensen’s focus is on events of alleged sexual violation and rape, and subsequent interrogations of those claims. In these instances ‘that thing that happened’, and which may ultimately be labelled ‘rape’, is not yet a part of the formal legal space of the courtroom. Instead Jensen approaches events while their meaning is under negotiation within the wider communities in which the alleged assaults occurred. Arguably, these are locations in which the outcome is equally, if not more, significant to those of more formal judicial spaces, given both the intricate entanglements between the lives of alleged victims and perpetrators, and the shifting assemblages of spaces, places, things and people which will ultimately determine the course of subsequent subjectifications and the culpability they can imply. The analysis Jensen employs echoes the concern, discussed above, with the capacity of violence to unseat the usual processes by which things (in this case, bodies) are constituted and ascribed meaning. In other words, violent acts interrupt illusions of stable categories and entities, as ‘bodies, spaces and things’ are enveloped in crises of coherence. Thus, what is important for Jensen’s purposes is what happens when one category/thing within the ‘scenography’ of an alleged act of sexual violence comes under question. The discovery of certain objects at a crime scene can provoke struggles over the meaning and status of other categories, practices and entities: for example, ‘the presence of an empty bottle of alcohol potentially changes or reconfigures a ravaged body from a victim to a loose woman’. This shifting and ongoing disruption of coherent categories is the ‘shimmering’ of bodies, places, spaces and things that sits at the heart of Jensen’s analysis.

The violated bodies of female victims play an unfortunate role in the persistence of instability at the root of these events, and the shimmering that confounds attempts to ascribe them meaning and stability. The subject herself, the person who has been assaulted, is frequently silent or silenced, and can easily disappear in narrative accounts and analyses of rape. There is a particular brutality in this form of violence in which ‘vanishing’ is exactly the consequence of the act and its disruption of the normal, and normative, ongoing social processes of constituting stable and contained (gendered) bodies – that tangible and ostensibly meaningful trace of the subject upon which the category of victim or ‘loose woman’ is inscribed. It is this ‘excessiveness’ of bodies, revealed through violation, which does not allow the ‘shimmering’ to settle. As Jensen notes, attempts to dismiss the stigma which follows victims are often confounded precisely

because the state of bodily ‘excess’ associated with (or revealed through) rape elicits disgust amongst witnesses, an emotion difficult to assuage since it cannot easily be given meaning or purpose. Such observations should continue, as Jensen’s article does, to give better texture to considerations of the struggles that subjects of sexual violence face, including, for instance, the stigma often associated with the public declaration of a rape, and the persistent reduction of the act and ‘the subject’ to a litany of bodily substances in the course of subsequent medical and legal proceedings.

Although it has utility across a broader context, Jensen’s work also hooks into a widespread anxiety within South Africa, about the apparent upsurge of interpersonal, often gender-based violence in the post-apartheid period. In her contribution to this issue, Mattoscio describes this pre-occupation as ‘an obsessive trope pervading national discourses’. Mattoscio follows these discourses in their dramatized form, examining the articulation of bodies in the literary texts and subsequent film adaptations of Nadine Gordimer’s *City Lovers* and *Country Lovers*, and J. M. Coetzee’s *Disgrace*, and offering the work here as an interrogation of violence within South Africa at its intersectionality: the entanglement of a ‘devastating sexual politics’ with categories of ‘gender, race, class and national constructions’. Film has specific utility, argues Mattoscio, in apprehending and examining bodily violations that have arisen in the course of these perceived, problematic sexual encounters. She draws on Deleuze’s apprehension of the finite surface of bodies as an illusion: if we understand ‘the body’ as an ‘assemblage of ever-changing energies, flows, corporeal substances and incorporeal events’, then placing bodies on screen permits their demonstration as relational processes, and so productively extends our (or viewers’) understanding of the material/categorical transformations that female protagonists undergo with, or in moments of, violence. Accepting ‘the body’ in this way, argues Mattoscio, allows us to see the significance of the association, or rather relationality, of bodies and subjects with certain animate and inanimate objects around and entangled with them – what Jensen calls the ‘scenography’. So, for instance, the settling of the camera upon a steel gynaecological speculum transforms the body of the main protagonist of *City Lovers*, Yvonne, into a particular kind of jurio-medicalized object in the hands of a racist, exclusionist state.

There are links to be drawn between Mattoscio’s reflections and Jensen’s concept of shimmering, perhaps most significantly in apprehending the ways in which power relations (as Mattoscio, citing Barad 2001, notes) are also formed and reinforced during exchanges; in this case a multiplicity of interactions in ‘the shifting [or shimmering] of bodies, identities, spaces and things’ with the violated bodies/persons seated at the root of these cases. Take, for instance, the Zuma rape court case cited by Jensen. It is not just *what* is held constant amongst the bodies/categories/meanings that are in flux which is significant, but *who* at any particular moment had the power to hold a category/thing constant, fixed and still, so that particular kinds of subject-hood can be constituted and ascribed, and who is to be ‘victim’ and who is to be ‘perpetrator’ can be determined. In this case, at least in the public face of things, Justice Willem van der Merwe carried this power. What we hold constant, argues Jensen, betrays our politics, but equally what is held constant is influenced by the things, objects, materials, places and bodies we come into contact with. Thus, the bottle of alcohol in one of the rape cases Jensen discusses becomes significant both due to its location at the alleged scene and because of deep-seated associations between the (ab)use of alcohol and compromised moral personhood. In the case of the Zuma rape trial, the *kanga*, constructed in a particular way by Zuma’s defence team, becomes indicative of the intentions of the woman who made the rape accusation. Via exchanges and engagements with all of these ‘shimmering’ things, meanings and subjectivities – from the judges’ political positioning (particularly in relation to Zuma himself), to the transformation of the *kanga* from ‘traditional’, commonplace clothing to sexually provocative dress – power dynamics are revealed, reconstituted and reaffirmed, and the act of violence can vanish, or at least be transformed into an act of generation,



so that a Zulu masculinity emerges for Zuma, displacing the original accusations and redetermining the accusing woman's (rather more complicated) subjectivity.

Yet this 'shimmering', and the corporeal excessivity to which its contingency is often bound, can work in all directions, open-ended, ephemeral and unfinished as it usually is. Differing from Jensen's example, Mattosco argues that the display or presence of corporeal associations can also be a means of 'resisting' or defying imposed categorizations of victimhood, itself often akin to a kind of subjugation (see also discussion in Jensen 2014). In its incorporation of Deleuzian notions of 'the body', Mattosco's analysis not only recognizes the often disempowering and disturbing resonances of violence of this sort, but also finds in the midst of violation potential capacities for corporeal transformations of a more 'aspirational' kind. In the transfer from text to film, 'fleshy' bodies and their unsettled, never quite resolved 'shimmering' (in entanglement with that of objects, things and places around them) offer a potential for 'rebellion' against, or at least an alternative response to, violations acted on and through the body; however, much violent acts are frequently born out of a desire for control and the (re-)inscription of new certainties. Thus, on screen, the disturbing gaze of Yvonne in *City Lovers*, as she endures painful invasion by the state gynaecologist, impresses upon the spectator more than can be encapsulated in the written description of the event. On screen this 'body' is never quite successfully reduced to a predefined and bounded object, and it is not fully 'explained away' by Gordimer's intention that the event be a stable, recognizable 'metaphor' for something else. The 'material obstinacy' of Yvonne's body, its obvious 'excess', defying semantic stability or narrative closure, remains uncomfortably apparent. Irresolution, in this case, offers something akin to a 'resistance' to attempts to control and to categorize, leaving open potentialities for further transformations as well as, of course, further transgressions.

### Traces, traumas and survivors

The brutality and intimacy of the violence carried out during Rwanda's conflicts and genocide in the 1990s are well known. The two following articles in this issue, by Guglielmo and Major, respectively, draw on recent research within Rwanda picking up on the legacies of this violence to examine how violated bodies can be radically productive. In these reflections, violated bodies and the shimmering they are enfolded within – moments, materials and things in excess of meaning – drive forward, provoke and are inscribed upon or through the work of re-categorizing and remaking persons and places. In Rwanda, arguably, it is not so much the extreme forms of violence of 1994 that were exceptional – although, of course, in many ways they were – but rather the intensity and longevity of interest in, and official intervention into, the corporeal remains and 'traumatic traces' of violence afterwards, which reveal how mutilated bodies/lives can form the locus of efforts to resettle and remake collectives, subjectivities and political orders in the wake of mass violence in very unexpected ways. The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) launched its 1994 invasion which ended the genocide from Uganda, and it seems likely that the RPF's approach to commemoration and particularly the display of bones (as discussed by Major) was influenced by similar practices that emerged during Uganda's internal struggles a decade earlier, even if these practices have undoubtedly been made their own in the two decades since.<sup>3</sup>

For the subjects of Guglielmo's paper, the disorder embroiled with and through the violence of the 1990s is brought to the surface of bodies and persons, quite literally, through new culture-bound afflictions of 'genocide trauma' emergent since a wave of international NGOs seeking to effect post-conflict 'healing', 'reconciliation' and 'transitional justice' descended upon the country after the violence of 1994 settled. In these particular and sometimes rather peculiar expressions of distress amongst Rwanda's genocide 'survivors', the affordances and constraints of violence appear to manifest with unrivalled potency. Those afflicted by 'trauma' may scream to

the point of hyperventilation, convulse, hallucinate or, conversely, fall into a catatonic-like state of depression. If we are to understand violence as revealing the fragility of normal and normative processes through which bodies, persons and collectives are meaningfully constituted, then this particular kind of state of 'trauma' embodies the incoherence that lies under the surface of those structuring processes. Yet, as Guglielmo's case study demonstrates, it is exactly the presence of such disordered bodies that can call forth public recognition of a meaningful and sympathetic identity for a subject, who is otherwise likely to be encased in the socialities of mistrust and suspicion which continue to mark Rwandan society two decades after the genocide. Through public displays of 'genocide trauma' traces of bodily knowledge and experience of violence are performed, given presence and made available for public scrutiny; and 'the body', as Mattoscio discusses in her paper, appears again as a vector of knowledge. In this way a vulnerable young woman, relatively unknown to the post-conflict community in which she lives, and therefore of questionable status and identity, is able to support her claims to 'survivor-hood', meaning in turn that she must be understood also as Tutsi, even if this is a subjectivity that no one can publically proclaim in this 'post-ethnic' nation. Displays of 'genocide trauma' – as performative, corporeal traces of past violent interruptions to normal processes of containment through which persons, bodies and statuses are constituted – therefore become, in turn, productive in their own right, and part of a profound remaking and re-stabilization of particular subjectivities, personhood and socialities.

When Mattoscio writes in her paper of drawing out the ethic of the spectator, she points to the very issue that Guglielmo confronts us with. The validity of Odette's claim to have suffered violence at the hands of the *interahamwe* [Hutu militia] may be under question, but, as with the spectators of Mattoscio's film, an ethical engagement with the unknown body in question begins with the connection between the viewers' own bodies and that of the body on 'screen'. Empathy begins 'with the flesh' in a sense, not with the character and their 'story' (Odette and her claimed past experiences, or Yvonne's experiences in *City Lovers*, for example). Here it is again the 'irreducible' or 'obstinate' materiality – that corporeal excess that cannot be explained away – that the expression of trauma so effectively engages with. In this sense, the corporeal excess that the violence of genocide and conflict expose and reveal is perhaps inevitably entangled with, and generative of, the kind of 'aspirational' corporeal forms that responses to that violence can equally entail, in which Mattoscio sees the possibility for 'resistance' or emancipation, and which Odette (in Guglielmo's contribution) successfully draws upon through displays of 'genocide trauma' to gain recognition of her survivor-hood. In other words, the excessive potentialities of corporeality can enable and make possible, as well as defy, question and deny, the stabilizations of particular meaning-making processes through which bodies, lives, persons and socialities find contingent presence and significance.

### **Exhumation, reburial and remaking**

Major's contribution, the fourth paper in this issue, follows Guglielmo's article, but also aligns with Eltringham's work on the display and concealment of bodies in Rwanda's genocide with which this editorial began. She considers the significance of the entanglement of Rwanda's genocide corpses with the extensive memorial and reconciliation efforts that came in the following decades. The country's network of genocide memorials contain the cleaned, disarticulated bones of victims unearthed from mass and individual graves during the late 1990s and 2000s. Inside the memorials these remains are often visible, stacked on shelving in hundreds and thousands, divided by rough anatomical type and usually rendered anonymous bar the collective label of (Tutsi) genocide victim. The bodily 'excess' that all the papers in this issue dwell upon is seated at the heart of the captivating nature of these ossuaries. In fact, for Rwanda's memorial bones,



unlike the bodies that Jensen and Mattoscio discuss in the first two articles, but rather more like the presentation of ‘trauma’ in genocide survivors that Guglielmo considers, this corporeal ‘excess’ is deliberately extended, channelled or utilized. The deliberate presentation of collective, disarticulated fragments of bodies prevents coherence from comfortable settling into these spaces, with the effect of both captivating and disarming spectators.

The analysis within Major’s article steps away from the memorials themselves, and turns back to the mass graves from which the bones derive, in order to draw out the complex, gritty making of these bones as such, an endeavor which examines the association between these places, the exhumed materials themselves and the genocide survivor-exhumers and handlers of those substances. This decidedly vernacular (as opposed to ‘forensic’) work involves the painstaking sifting and separating out of what are seen as more and less significant substances. This is a fraught process for these exhumers who are frequently relatives of those buried within the graves. Violence of the past is suddenly tangibly manifest in the resurfacing of these remains: complete bodies are difficult to ‘find’ and when remains are located, the edges of once contained, bounded bodies are almost impossible to secure. The entangled mass of bones, soft flesh and personal possessions bears traces of the once-embodied subjects, but in moments of recognition between exhumers and exhumed, any known or knowable association is also quickly irreparably followed by the deliberate disassembling, destruction and distancing of known individual persons from the mass of human materials. Human materials – flesh, bone, cloths and artefacts – are carefully washed, disassembled and disarticulated, and then reconstituted not into known, named individuals, rather into an anonymous, unnamed collective dead, wherein individual subjectivities and histories are deliberately eschewed and denied.

Contrasting the way in which mass graves containing the remains of victims of the Spanish Civil War have been exhumed and painstakingly remade into known individuals (as discussed by Renshaw 2011) over the last decade or so, Major draws attention to the difficulties of treating Rwanda’s genocide remains in a similar way. In Spain, 40 years have passed since the end of Franco’s regime, allowing specific memories of individual persons to be more easily vocalized and publically associated with particular remains than was the case immediately after the civil war, or during Franco’s long rule. In Rwanda, however, the continuing threat or fear of violence, and the social uncertainties many Rwandans face in the wake of the mass killings which tore families and communities apart across the country continue to usurp attempts to settle, ‘remake’ (Fontein 2014) or ‘gather-in’ (as Renshaw describes it) individual dead. This ongoing uncertainty makes survivors’ attachments to the unsettling human materials exhumed from the mass graves remain both much more affective and much riskier. As with Guglielmo’s story of Odette, social categories, status, spaces and things continue to ‘shimmer’, as identities and subjectivities remain open to (re)interpretation, transformation and denial.

Despite the utility, for the RPF government at least, of presenting these disassembled human materials in this anonymous and undifferentiated way, which feeds their need for a single, uncomplicated account of the 1994 genocide, ultimately the excessive qualities of the human materials animating these memorials locate at their heart a profound uncertainty which unsettles their construction and maintenance, and those who are involved with them. For the genocide survivors, the memorials are both upsetting and precious. Anger, fear and grief stew in these spaces in a manner that many find mesmerizing and oddly comforting. At the same time a distinct sense of unease is provoked by the ‘shimmering’ of these bones, which seem closer to ‘relics’ than the settled, dignified remains of the dead.<sup>4</sup> In recent years, the RPF government has revealed hints of a change of heart, not towards the restoration of individuated personhood for exhumed corpses, as in exhumations in Spain and elsewhere, but towards the ‘conservation’ of human remains in their ‘entire’/‘intact’ fleshy, exhumed form, albeit still without individual identification (Major, *forthcoming*). There may yet, therefore, be a further opportunity to reflect on how the politics of violent

pasts operates through corporeal excessivity, as the RPF's official renditions of Rwanda's past remain subject to accusations of fabrication and falsehood that are driven in part, we suggest, by the 'shimmering' of 'bodies, places and things' making up these troubled memorial landscapes. However, much as the ongoing uncertainty of identity, memory and culpability is problematic for many Rwandans, it clearly continues to serve a purpose for the RPF. Far from 'gathering in' (Renshaw 2010, 2011) assemblages of human remains, artifacts, oral memories and testimonies in order to secure a sense of coherent closure and stability, Rwanda's fleshy remains may in the future continue to be deployed, like the washed bones of its memorial complexes now, in an effort to maintain a deliberate level of uncertainty and indeterminacy that allows it to maintain the affective force of its own credibility/legitimacy as the liberators who ended the horrors of the 1994 genocide. In this perspective, the preservation of fleshy remains too may confirm the RPF's apparent determination to secure simplistic, divisive narratives of genocide perpetrators, victims and survivors, even as it benefits, at the same time, from the indeterminacy that the corporealities of violence necessarily exude (cf. Fontein 2014). At the same time, of course, the political affects of the profound uncertainties that the corporeal excessivity of human remains can provoke are rarely (if ever) dependent entirely on human intentionalities, and it remains very unclear the extent to which Rwanda's still emergent, and fascinating, necropolitical commemorative complex *is* the result of deliberate coherent design, or rather of multiple agencies and historical contingencies.

In the final article of the issue, Jahn and Wilhelm-Solomon focus on post-conflict efforts in Northern Uganda to exhume and relocate human remains buried within Acholiland's now defunct, former internal displacement camps. Drawing upon in-depth ethnographic work in camps and sites of resettlement, the authors argue that both scholars who work in refugee studies and those driving forward the agendas of development and 'reconstruction' have often failed to appreciate 'the importance of cosmological concerns and the ways these are bound up with questions of territoriality'. The work of reburial and its associated rituals, they argue, often become sites where disrupted moral orders, and their cosmological consequences which disturb post-conflict life for the Acholi, may be 'reworked'; a literal, physical transformation and spiritual re-inscription of both the bones of the dead, and of the landscape in which they will be interred. Landscapes and 'place', the author's reiterate, must be 'made'. There is no inherent, stable metaphysical link between people and places, but through ongoing and constantly reworked ritual and practice, a 'material landscape of belonging' may be established (Jahn and Wilhelm-Solomon, citing Fontein 2011, 714). Placed in the context of this issue, Jahn and Wilhelm-Solomon reinforce the discussions of the preceding articles by pointing to the productive potentiality of corporeal excessivity which not only at once both demands and denies containment and stabilization, but also always holds promising affordances and potentialities for the remaking of people, society, places and landscapes, pasts and futures.

Taken together, all of the articles collated here both illustrate and bring critical questions to Taylor's (1999) and Eltringham's (2015) arguments for the recognition of culturally determined patterns embedded in the manner in which violence and post-violence in Rwanda and elsewhere is orchestrated. Jahn and Wilhelm-Solomon's article both supports and furthers Taylor's argument. Both note that the ritual reworking of material human substances (in the Ugandan case, disinterred corpses; in Taylor's, living bodies) has important cosmological implications. As Jahn and Wilhelm-Solomon assert, these cosmological implications should be understood as intimately entangled with material substances in a manner not reducible to the (arbitrary) work of metaphor. Their argument feeds back into the issue's central purpose: to move beyond 'the body' as 'discursive vehicle'. For Taylor the physical form or pattern of violence perpetrated during the Rwandan genocide was fuelled by broad symbolic (and synchronic) systems through which Rwandans make sense of the world (1999). The drive to 'unblock' bodies made sense because individual

bodies were understood to be analogous to the broader landscape and body politic. Taylor's point gathers strength if we move away from the notion of a symbolic system in play, and understand the bodies of victims not as mute surfaces upon which an 'unblocking' is enacted, nor (as Mattosco's employment of Deleuze notes) as 'a bounded thing', but rather 'as an assemblage of ever-changing energies, flows, corporeal substances and incorporeal events'. In this vein, the mutilation of bodies – like post-violence exhumations – involves not just metaphorical but very literal corporeal transformations, interferences and transgressions that question static, dichotomized categories of matter and meaning, revealing them to be not only entangled, relationally constituted and mutually dependent, but also opened-ended and ultimately indeterminate, in constant, unfinished processes of constitution, stabilization and becoming. We believe that extending Taylor's (and Eltringhams') symbolic approach to violence by incorporating materiality and (especially) *corporeality* in this manner allows the 'poetics' and 'pragmatics' of violence and post-violence to be more closely and better attended to. If we approach bodies and human materials and forms as intertwined with and embedded in or 'moving along with' (Ingold 1993) the world, and part of the unfinished becoming of broader material and cosmological landscapes, regimes and orders, then we can begin to understand how violence and post-violence are necessarily bound together in inevitable engagement with the imaginative and productive potentialities of corporeality's 'excessivity'. Furthermore, this may reveal that sometimes such efforts are driven not by a desire to restore order, stabilize or 'unblock' bodies and landscapes, but by their very opposite: to unseat, destabilize and unbind the normative regimes through which bodies, persons, socialities, orders and structures, places and landscapes are contingently bound and constituted, generating and exploiting the very categorical/material 'shimmering' that the corporealities of violence, as discussed here, can provoke.

## Notes

1. See workshop webpage: [http://www.san.ed.ac.uk/research/grants\\_and\\_projects/current\\_projects/ba\\_international\\_partnership/2\\_-\\_corporealities\\_of\\_violences\\_in\\_southern\\_africa](http://www.san.ed.ac.uk/research/grants_and_projects/current_projects/ba_international_partnership/2_-_corporealities_of_violences_in_southern_africa), accessed 13/5/15.
2. See, for example, Bernault (2006, 2010), Casper and Moore (2009), Crossland (2009a, 2009b), Filippucci et al. (2012); Fontein (2009, 2010, 2014), Fontein and Harries (2009, 2013), Harries, Fontein, and Krmpotich (2010), Jindra and Noret (2011), Lee and Vaughan (2008), Mbembe (2003), Posel and Gupta (2009), Renshaw (2010) and Stepputat (2014).
3. We are grateful to Justin Willis (personal communication) for alerting us to this.
4. See discussion in Filippucci et al. (2012).

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